TV tapes of Gervais doubtful

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By ED LEPOMA

Tape recordings of television interviews with government informer Pershing O. Gervais are not likely to be admitted as evidence in the pinball bribery trial of Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison and two others, the presiding judge said today.

U.S. Dist. Court Judge Herbert W. Christenberry told defense attorneys he has "grave doubts" about admitting the audio tapes. He said the defense indicated in its opening statements yesterday that it might use the television tapes.

"I have given this considerable thought," the judge said. "I have grave doubts that these tapes would be admissible."

He said he was telling the defense counsel now because he didn't want it to come as a surprise and also because they might want to put Gervais on the witness stand.

He said the defense could give him a memorandum in which the lawyers might build a case for allowing the tapes.

K. Eric Gisleson, a member of the prosecution team, told the judge the government will attempt to certify a voice identification expert as a witness before it offers its tape recordings into evidence.

The government's tapes were gathered by Gervais in his capacity as an informer. The government has said it will present 35 Gervais tapes purported to represent 70 conversations with defendants in the case.

Gisleson did not identify the voice identification expert but said the expert has been in New Orleans since the trial opened Monday.

Gisleson said the prosecution has given Judge Christenberry a memorandum outlining use of voice experts by the Michigan State Police.

The discussions about the tapes came in the absence of the jury.